on the Enquiry desk and to answer the enquiry calls are the most rude, arrogant, unenthusi-astic and abuse the common public who approach them for railway enquiries;

(b) what steps will be taken to see that proper persons are kept to man these sensitive desks; and

(c) what steps will be taken to improve presently worst condition of the Nagpur railway station?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS, PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI RAM NAIK): (a) No specific complaint about rude behaviour of Enquiry Clerks at the Nagpur railway station has been received.

(b) and (c) Any incident of rude behaviour on the part of the staff is viewed seriously and the staff found at fault is taken up under Discipline

and Appeal Rules. In order to improve the working of enquiry office, three telephone lines have recently been provided in addition to four existing lines. Four new lines have also been added to Interactive Voice Response System (IVRS) at the station.

Conversion of the metre gauge lines into broad-gauge

2093. SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to convert all the metre gauge lines into broad gauge;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the names of such lines and the total length to be converted;

(c) the time by which this work is likely to be completed; and

(d) the expenditure likely to be incurred thereon alongwih the per km. cost of conver sion?-

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS, PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI RAM NAIK): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) The lines converted so far, works in progress and those planned for conversion together with the likely time of completion wherever decided are indicated in the Annexure *(See* Appendix 184, Annexure No. 64)

(d) The expenditure incurred so far since 1.4.92 is Rs. 5229.22 crs. Rs. 803 crs. are planned to be spent in 1998-99. The funds to be provided in the coming years will depend on the overall availability of resources. The per km. cost of conversion is about Rs. 1.2 crs. at current rates.

Proposal to construct a fly-over at Kuppam in Andhra Pradesh

2094. DR. Y LAKSHMI PRASAD: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to construct a fly-over at Kuppam in Andhra Pradesh on 50% cost basis;

(b) if so, whether the sanction has been issued in this regard; and

(c) if not, the reasons for delay?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS, PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI RAM NAIK): (a) Yes, Sir, in lieu of Level crossing No. 101.

(b) and (c) The work has been included in the Railway Budget 1998-99. However, it will be taken as sanctioned on passing of the Railway Budget by the Parliament.

Telephone Facility in Rajdhani Express Trains

2095. SHRI SANJAY NIRUPAM: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether telephone facility has been provided in Rajdhani Express Trains;

(b) if so, the details of other trains where this facility has been provided or is proposed to be provided; and

(c) whether Government have received any complaint about non-functioning of this facility?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI RAM NAIK): (a) Yes, Sir. This facility has so far been provided in 9 out of 12 Rajdhani Express Trains and is being extended to the remaining 3 Rajdhani Express Trains shortly.

(b) The system is being monitored and its extension to other trains would depend upon

success and popularity of the scheme in Rajdhani Express Trains.

(c) No, Sir. However, since the equipment is owned and maintained by VSNL and since no spares are available, the train goes without this facility whenever the equipment is faulty and under repair.

Double lane fly-over between Poalsit and Saktigarh

2096. SHRI ANANTRAY DEVSHANKER DAVE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is true that the planning was poor for construction of double lane fly over between Poalsit and Saktigarh as per the CAG Report;

(b) how much amount has been spent due to the poor planning; and

(c) what action have been taken in this behalf against any responsible person?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI RAM NAIK): (a) No, Sir. However, there have been deviations due to increase in quantity, additon of new items and deletion of items on technical considerations and site conditions.

(b) The net increase in cost was Rs. 5,38 crs. after taking into account the cost of de leted items. The extra expenditure had to be incurred on account of increase of length of viaduct being unavoidable, Site constraints like existence of railway quarters at Poalsit GT Road, private land with houses an existing lines in proximity of embankment neces sitated extension of the viaduct.

(c) Deviation being necessitated by tech nical considerations and site conditions, no individual was responsible for the same.

Silchar-Lumding broad gauge project

2097. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTA CHARJEE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a sum of Rs. 30 crores has been returned from the Silchar-Lumding broad gauge project due to its non-utilisation within the stipulated period;

(b) if so, reasons for its non-utilisation;

(c) if non-utilisation was due to the'incompetence of project officials whether Government proposes any action against them;

(d) whether Government are contemplating any steps to complete the project in time; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS, PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI RAM NAIK): (a) to (e) Initially funds of Rs. 30 crs. were allotted for the project against which final allotment was reduced to Rs. 2 crs. and Rs. 1.16 crs., were actually utilised. The alignment from Lumding to Badarpur passes through hilly terrain where sharp curves, steep gradient and tunnels are encountered in MG, while BG alignment follows flat curves and flatter gradients for which Final Location Survey is in progress and the work will be taken up after this survey is completed. The entire conversion is to be completed in one phase and it would take around 6-7 years for completion provided adequate funds commensurate with the actual progress are made available in future.

As regards the remaining section from Badarpur to Silchar which is plain and does not have sharp curves and steep gradients, work on earthwork and bridges is in progress.

Planning Commission is being requested to provide additional funds for progressing and completing all the projects in the North Eastern Region in a time bound manner.

New Railway lines in Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh

2098. SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the names of routes where survey has been conducted to lay new railway lines in Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh during 1996, 1997 and the current year; and

(b) the estimated cost of each of these projects?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI RAM NAIK): (a) and (b) A statement is attached.